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Annual Report to the Idaho Legislature

CREATION:

The Idaho Statewide Interoperability Executive Council was created from the tragedies experienced on September 11, 2001. On that date, many public safety responders lost their lives because they could not talk to one another. With the creation of the SIEC, Idaho made a positive decision to protect the lives of its public safety first responders in service to Idaho citizens, and provide them the communications capability they deserved.

Since their initial creation in 2002, SIECs have functioned as an instrument for collaborative interoperable communications planning and implementation bringing together local, tribal, state and federal emergency responders. SIECs, or equivalent, have been formed in all US states and territories under the guidance of the Federal Communications Commission and the US Department of Homeland Security. As designed, SIECs maintain a collaborative working relationship with the federal agencies involved in development of nationwide interoperable communications.

The SIEC began in Executive Order 2003-07. Legislation was passed during the 2006 session of the Idaho Legislature to enact the Idaho Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC) in statute. In 2007, the SIEC administrative operations were transferred to the Idaho Military Division.

Idaho Code § 46-1204 outlines the SIEC's purpose and responsibilities as follows:

"The council will serve as the governing body in affairs of public safety wireless radio interoperable communications for local and private entities and coordinate with the Idaho department of administration, which is responsible for state agency planning, to meet short-range and long-range telecommunications needs as authorized in chapter 57, title 67, Idaho Code. The council will promote interagency cooperation and provide support statewide for efficient and effective use of local and private resources to achieve public safety wireless radio interoperable communications for local and private public safety agencies."

ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CHALLENGES AND GOALS:

The following outlines accomplishments and challenges for 2007, and SIEC goals for 2008.

2007 Accomplishment: Submittal of the Public Safety Interoperable Communications (PSIC) Grant application in partnership with the Idaho Military Division. The SIEC met its statutory responsibility as outlined in HB 334 from the 2007 Idaho Legislative session which stated: "The distribution of moneys, as appropriated in Section 1 of this act, shall be determined through the

Office of the Governor by the Idaho Statewide Interoperability Executive Council, using established grant processes through the Bureau of Homeland Security. Funding shall be used to provide the necessary infrastructure for building an interoperable public safety and public services communication system for the benefit of all Idahoans.”

Challenge: The amount granted by the US Department of Commerce (\$7.3 million) was less than Idaho expected; the SIECs challenge was to distribute the funding to statewide projects yielding the greatest enhancement to interoperable communications statewide, and leverage previous regional interoperable investments.

2008 Goal: Assist the SIECs statewide partners to successfully implement their PSIC funded interoperable communications infrastructure projects in coordination with existing statewide infrastructure.

2007 Accomplishment: The SIEC, under the Idaho Military Division, is administering a one-year statewide operational needs and technical resources assessment due for completion October 2008. The assessment will become the foundation for the design-build and build-out of the statewide interoperable emergency communications system.

Challenge: Insuring that the public safety needs and resources of local, tribal and State agencies statewide are included in the assessment.

2008 Goal: Complete the assessment. The assessment will provide the foundational requirements of public safety statewide in order to move forward with the design-build process.

2007 Accomplishment: The SIEC previously adopted and continues to recommend Project 25 (P 25) as the standard for radio communications in Idaho. The use of P25 standard equipment conforms to guidelines established by the National Institute of Standards and Technology in its efforts to create compatible interfacing for all public safety equipment regardless of manufacturer.

Challenge: Ensuring that the industry continues to conform to these federal standards. The SIEC mitigates this challenge by monitoring both federal and industrial sources charged with compliance, using this information for acquisition and planning decisions, and sharing such information with our statewide public safety constituents.

2008 Goal: Continue monitoring P-25 federal standards and compliance. Provide input on standards and compliance to the federal industrial regulating entities, and keep Idaho's emergency responders informed.

2007 Accomplishment: The SIEC, in conjunction with the Idaho Military Division, Bureau of Homeland Security, reviewed and approved twenty-seven (27) of thirty (30) county emergency communications plans that facilitate multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdictional interoperability. This information supplements the statewide assessment and will be utilized for the development of the statewide emergency communications system.

Challenge: Coordinating the county interoperable communications resources with those of the State of Idaho to increase interoperable emergency communication coverage statewide.

2008 Goal: Develop a comprehensive statewide plan for local, tribal and State agencies, including priority identification and coordination of resource acquisition / allocation based upon the information collected in the statewide assessment.

MEMBERSHIP

The SIEC Council consists of 18 members, 4 federal liaisons, and one member each from the Idaho Senate and Idaho House of Representatives. The members of the SIEC are appointed by the Governor and represent local statewide governmental associations and state agencies. The federal liaisons represent the organizations closely associated with the purpose of the Council.

Members:

R. Mark Lockwood – Chair	Idaho Chiefs of Police Association
Lorin Nielsen – Vice Chair	Idaho Sheriffs' Association
Bob Burke	Idaho Department of Lands
Michael Candelaria	United States Department of Interior
Shannon Cluney	Idaho Department of Corrections
Dia Gainor	Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Jerry Goetz	Federal Law Enforcement
Representative Marv Hagedorn	Idaho House of Representatives
Lt. Col. Art Keen	Idaho National Guard
Mary Halverson	Idaho Military Division
Senator James Hammond	Idaho Senate
Joe Heggen	Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Mark Hilton	National Interagency Fire Center
Greg Laragan	Idaho Transportation Department
Shawn Larsen	Association of Idaho Cities
Jerry Russell	Idaho State Police
William Shawver	Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security
Reggie Thorpe	Idaho Tribal Government
Mark Wendelsdorf	Idaho Fire Chiefs Association
Joe Young	Idaho Association of Counties
VACANT	Idaho Department of Administration
VACANT	U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security Trans. Security

SIEC OPERATIONS

The Council operates on an annual budget of approximately \$276,000 sub granted to the SIEC by the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security. In July 2007, SIEC operations were transferred to Gowen Field, and the staff position was changed to the Interoperable Communications Program Manager which currently manages SIEC administration and assists the Military's Public Safety Communications Division with matters of local concern.

THE "STATE" OF INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS IN IDAHO

- Since the tragic events which took place on September 11, 2001, it is estimated that Idaho's cities, counties and tribes have received close to \$20 million dollars in federal assistance for interoperable communications. Strategic application of funds supplements daily operations for 80% of Idaho's emergency responders through **increased mutual aid response time**. The State of Idaho emergency response agencies are partnering

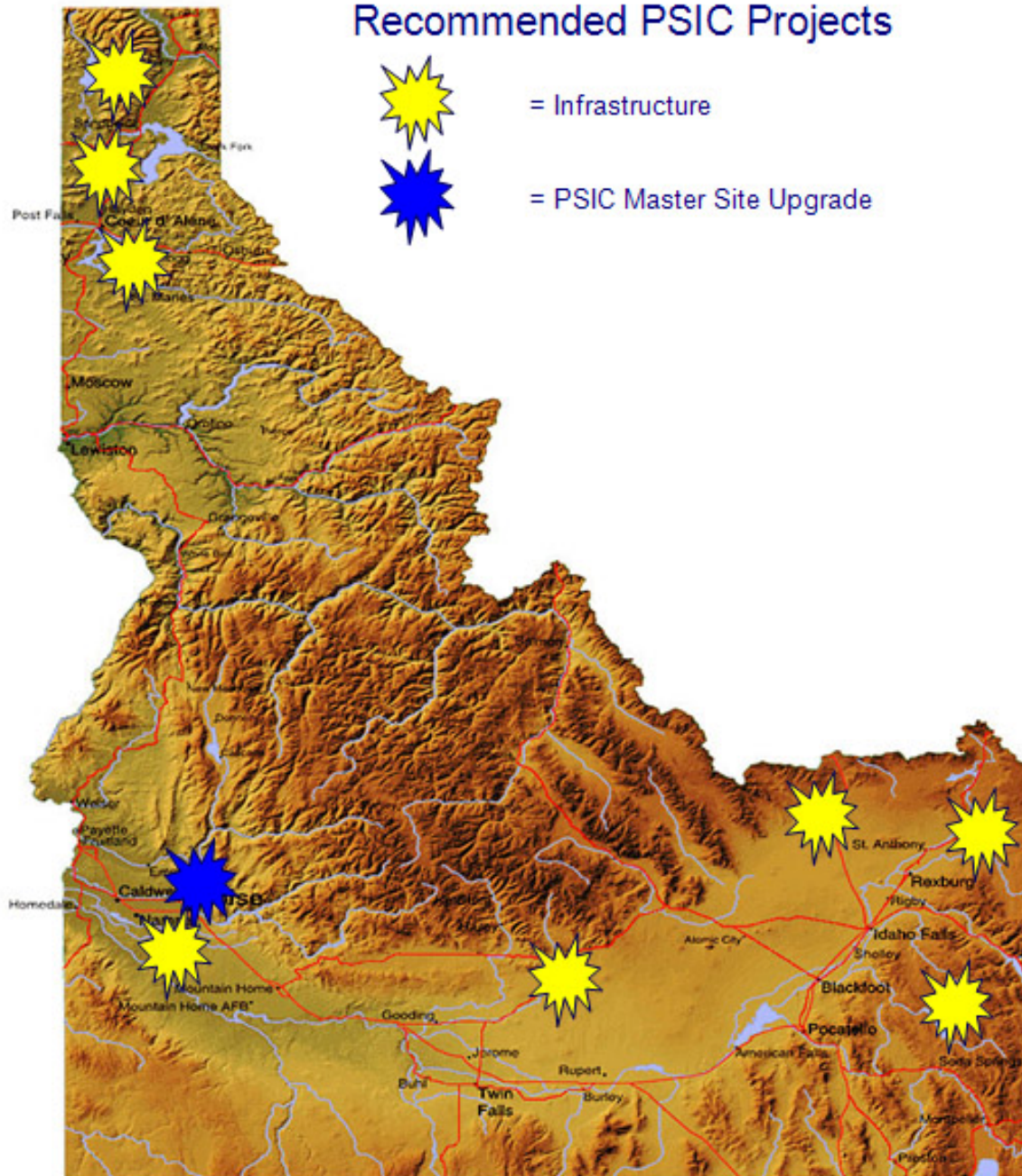
with local government to increase emergency communications capability, this under the guidance and management of the Idaho Military Division and SIEC.

- With the transfer of public safety emergency communications from the Idaho Department of Administration to the Idaho Military Division and the operational coordination of the SIEC and the E911 Commission under the same, shared missions have realized **increased efficiencies and outcomes**. For example, statewide interoperable communications project management decisions and actions are more comprehensive due to the fact that management and staff are better able to communicate because their offices are in the same building.
- New challenges appeared for the SIEC in 2007 by way of a rule change from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) affecting the availability of spectrum for use in 700MHz data transmission. These changes and any potential impacts on Idaho's first responder community are being closely monitored by the SIEC and will be mitigated on behalf of Idaho's public safety responder community to **ensure development of seamless communications**.
- The SIEC revised and reissued its *Idaho Cooperative Agencies' Wireless Interoperable Network (I-C-A-WIN)* document. The revision was necessary due to the **ever increasing statewide interoperable communications successes** achieved since its writing in 2005. For example, emergency responders in the southwest and southeast region of the state operate their emergency communications system on the 700MHz frequency and have commented that the change to 700MHz has significantly increased clarity and coverage. Tests conducted in the northern region of the state have shown the same. Work is far from done as the SIEC awaits results of the statewide assessment that will better determine how to enhance emergency communications in the topographically challenged areas of the state.
- The I-C-A-WIN document continues to serve as the foundation of a phased approach to the development of a statewide interoperable system for voice, data and video communications which will assist public safety on a day-to-day basis, during times of catastrophic events and large scale emergencies. In addition, I-C-A-WIN serves as reference material by our national partners.

THE FUTURE

The SIEC's continued vision is to create and utilize a "communications backbone" through the employment of the State of Idaho microwave and fiber systems, thus providing the ability to connect all regional systems together in order to develop a secure and redundant communications system statewide. This system will allow public safety responders to communicate with one another regardless of location, in day-to-day operations and times of catastrophic events across the state. The system would also bridge Idaho's communications with its neighbor states and Canadian neighbor to improvement mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities for all hazards. The SIEC with its statewide partners will continue to work as one team with one mission. This team will seek out all funding opportunities which will assist in the continued development of a redundant statewide communications system for Idaho's public safety responders.

Recommended PSIC Projects



For additional information on the SIEC please contact Chief R. Mark Lockwood, Chair, (208) 263-3105 or Dodie Collier, Project Manager, 208-422-5121 or go to www.siec.id.gov.